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09/447,378	11/23/1999	RYUJI NISHIKAWA	005586-20019	3746

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HOGAN & HARTSON L.L.P.
500 S. GRAND AVENUE
SUITE 1900
LOS ANGELES, CA 90071-2611

EXAMINER

QI, ZHI QIANG

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2871

DATE MAILED: 05/02/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/447,378

Applicant(s)

NISHIKAWA ET AL.

Examiner

Mike Qi

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 March 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6-9, 12-14, 18, 21-23 and 26-37 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 24 and 39 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5, 10, 11, 15-17, 19, 20, 25 and 38 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____

4) ☐ Interview with Examiner (PTO-900)

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

2. Claims 1-5, 10, 15-17, 19 and 38 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Applicant admitted prior art (AAPA).

Claims 1, 15 and 38, AAPA discloses (page 1, line 10 – page 5, line 27, page 5, lines 17-22; Figs. 1-3) a structure of a conventional liquid crystal display device comprising:

- a plurality of pixel electrodes (19) and an opposing electrode (34) disposed to oppose the plurality of pixel electrodes (19) with the liquid crystal (21) therebetween;

- applied voltage controls the liquid crystal molecules to incline in a plurality of orientation directions);
- a light-shielding film (32 in Fig.2 or the drain line 50 made of metal, being a conductive material, functions as a light-shielding film in Fig.3) is disposed to overlap with the boundaries of the orientation directions of the liquid crystal which are formed by the orientation divider (orientation control window 36);
 - the orientation divider (36) is provided in a space region between pixels (19) and in a region other than the spacer region as shown in the Figs.1-3;
 - the light-shielding film such as the drain line (50) functions as a light-shielding film which overlapping the orientation divider (36) (see Fig.3, the drain line 50 partially overlapping the orientation divider 36), and the overlapping region is in the region other than the space region along an extension direction of the orientation divider (the space region is a region between pixels).

Claims 2 and 16, AAPA discloses (page 1, line 10 - page 5, line 27; Figs.1-3) a liquid crystal display device comprising:

- the liquid crystal (21) is sealed between the first substrate (10) and the second substrate (30) to oppose each other;
- the first substrate (10) has switching elements (TFTs 13) connected to the gate signal lines (51), the drain signal lines (50) and the pixel electrodes (19);
- the opposing electrode (34) is formed on the second substrate (30) to oppose the liquid crystal

Claims 3-4, AAPA discloses (page 4, lines 3-25; page 2, lines 7-13; Figs.1-3) that a liquid crystal display device comprises the orientation divider (orientation control window 36) divides the orientation direction of the liquid crystal by the electric flux line produced in a slanting direction at the end of the pixel electrode (19) and the end of orientation control window (36), and that is inclined with respect to the normal line of the pixel electrode (19) and/or the opposing electrode (34); and orientation control window (36) is formed by removing ITO as an opposing electrode material in the opposing electrode (34) (forming an opening) at position to overlap the pixel electrodes (19).

Claims 5 and 17, AAPA discloses (page 5, lines 17-22; Figs.1-3) that the drain signal lines (50) are made of a light-shielding material such as metal, so that the drain signal lines (50) also functions as a light-shielding film.

Claims 10 and 19, AAPA discloses (page 3, lines 12-19; Figs.1-3) that the nematic liquid crystal (21) has a negative anisotropy of dielectric constant, and a vertical orientation film (20) is formed to cover the pixel electrodes (19).

3. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US 6,097,466 (Koma).

Claim 25, Koma discloses (col.2, line 56 – col.3, line 3; col.3, line 66 – col.6, line 43; Figs. 1-2) a liquid crystal display device comprising:

- liquid crystal layer (40) is sealed between the first substrate (10) and the opposed substrate (30);
- the first substrate (10) has switching elements (TFTs) connected to gate

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- which are connected to the TFTs through contact hole and made of Al (metal) conductive material, and a vertical alignment film (28) for orienting the liquid crystal;
- the second substrate (30) has an opposing common electrode (32) which has alignment control window (34) at position overlapping with the pixel electrodes (26) to control the orientation of the liquid crystal and a vertical alignment film (28) for orienting the liquid crystal;
 - the drain signal lines (18L) are disposed on the first substrate (10) at positions that overlap with the alignment control window (34) (see Fig.1);
 - the alignment control window (34) has a width different from the drain signal line (18L) (see the Fig.1 looks the width of the orientation control window is different from the drain line).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 11 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of US 6,097,466 (Koma).

lines 17-22; Figs.1-3) a structure of a conventional liquid crystal display device comprising:

- a plurality of pixel electrodes (19) and an opposing electrode (34) disposed to oppose the plurality of pixel electrodes (19) with the liquid crystal (21) therebetween;
- an orientation divider (orientation control window 36) for dividing an orientation of the liquid crystal in a single pixel into a plurality of directions (the applied voltage control the liquid crystal molecules to incline in a plurality of orientation directions);
- a light-shielding film (32 in Fig.2 or the drain line 50 made of metal, being a conductive material, functions as a light-shielding film in Fig.3) is disposed to overlap with the boundaries of the orientation directions of the liquid crystal which are formed by the orientation divider (orientation control window 36);
- the nematic liquid crystal (21) has a negative anisotropy of dielectric constant, and a vertical orientation film (20) is formed to cover the pixel electrodes (19).

AAPA does not expressly disclose the orientation divider has a width different from that of the light-shielding film.

However, Koma discloses (Fig.1) that the alignment control widow (34) (as the orientation divider) has a width different from the drain signal line (18L) (because the drain signal line must be made of conductive material such as metal for the electrical conductivity. so that the metal also functions as a light-shielding film) The Fig1 shows

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that the light would be securely shielded and decrease the light leakage, and that would be increase the display contrast.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to those skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to arrange the width of the orientation divider is different from the width of the light-shielding film as claimed in claims 11 and 20 for achieving more securely light shielding and improving the display contrast.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claim 24 and 39 are allowed.

7. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

The prior art of record neither discloses nor teaches a liquid crystal display device comprising various elements, more specifically, as the following:

The drain signal lines are disposed to overlap the orientation control window's extension region along the longitudinal direction of the extension region, or in other words, a light-shielding film is disposed to overlap the orientation divider along the extension direction of the orientation divider [claims 24, 39].

The closest references AAPA, US 6,097,466 (Koma) and US 6,157,428 (Koma) disclose a structure of a liquid crystal using alignment control window to divide the orientation direction in a pixel electrode region so as to enlarge the viewing angle display. but the prior art of record do not disclose the arrangement for the alignment

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disposed to overlap the orientation divider along the extension direction of the orientation divider as shown in Fig.4 so as to increase the contrast ratio.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-5,10-11,15-17,19-20,24-25,38-39 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mike Qi whose telephone number is (703) 308-6213.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

Mike Qi
April 30, 2003

EXAMINER
MICHAEL J. JAMES